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STATEMENT BY

THE HONORABLE W. AVERELL HARRIMAN

Formerly Ambassador to Russia and Great Britain,
Secretary of Commerce, Marshall Plan Ambassador
in Europe, Special Assistant to President Truman,
Director of the Mutual Security Agency, and
Governor of New York

Before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL POLICY MACHINERY

Senator Henry M. Jackson, Chairman

June 2, 1960

My congratulations to this Subcommittee and its chairman for undertaking its nonpartisan study of how our government should best organize to formulate and execute national security policy.

It is of course true that governmental policies are made by living men -- and not some inanimate abstraction called "governmental machinery." But it is also true that our policy-makers can be greatly helped, or hindered, by the manner in which we organize human talent to bear upon the policy process.

I therefore find myself in agreement with your Subcommittee's Interim Report when it says that "good national security policy requires both good policymakers and good policy machinery. One cannot be divorced from the other."

I also agree with your Subcommittee's insistence upon organizational flexibility. Each President has his own work style, and each will therefore wish to organize his office differently. The same is also true of Cabinet officers. A type of organization admirably suited for one person may be unworkable for another.

Finally, I agree with your Subcommittee in its warning against confusing paper organizational charts with the realities of the policy process. The real problem is not how to set up boxes on organization charts; it is to make sure that the right men are assigned to the right posts, and that they spend their time grappling with the right problems.

I have read the testimony of Robert A. Lovett, my former colleague in government and business. He has answered many of the specific questions raised in the committee's Interim Report. I find myself in substantial agreement with his statement and therefore will not attempt to cover the ground he has so effectively dealt with.

With these prefatory remarks, I should like to turn to certain problems which I believe are of interest to your Subcommittee. The full range of questions you have been exploring obviously transcends the knowledge of any one person, and my remarks will be confined to those areas where my background and experience may make my observations of some possible assistance.

The White House Staff

My experience as Ambassador, as Secretary of Commerce, and as a Special Assistant in the White House have given me opportunities to observe some of the immense problems of organization faced by any American President.

Some students of public administration favor establishing large policy making staffs at the White House level. But such a move, in my opinion, would be a mistake. Insofar as possible, the place for policy-making should be concentrated within the departments. The departments are on the firing line of planning and policy-making; they include specialized skills; they have the invaluable advantage of intimate day to day contact with operating problems. In contrast, those working in the White House have largely second-hand information. Any effort to do detailed planning in the White House therefore inevitably runs the danger of resulting in ivory tower policies.

The true worth of the President's staff is found in another direction. Its real job must be to coordinate departmental positions -- either to bring them together or to compose differences and lay bare any conflicts which cannot be resolved. I cannot emphasize too strongly my feeling that the President must be made aware of such conflicts between the departments. These must be presented to him in sufficient detail to permit him to understand the true issues in deciding between departmental views after discussions with the senior officers involved. Any attempt to solve sharp differences of opinion short of the President can only lead to lowest common denominator solutions which evade the real issues.

The Secretary of State -- His Responsibilities and Burdens

The Secretary of State must have the senior position in the President's councils in all matters relating to foreign policy. He should have the right to express himself, if he cares to do so, on the adequacy of defense programs -- or on any other policy question affecting foreign affairs. But this should be a right -- not an obligation. He has a tremendous job as it is, and he should not be further unnecessarily burdened with additional responsibility.

It is vital that the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense have constant personal communication between each other. It is equally important that the staff members of their two departments

talk together, and work together. Senior policy-makers in the State Department should have direct personal access to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Planners in one department should have continuous cross-contact with their counterparts in the other department, so that points of view of each department can be brought to bear upon problems before departmental positions are taken. It should be provided that any groups working in the State Department or Defense Department on policies should have the privilege of calling upon their opposite numbers for advice during the formative period of policy-making.

The burdens of the Secretary of State are of course enormous. He advises the President on foreign policy. He bears the major responsibility for organizing the Department of State. He is expected to attend top level international meetings, which have been occurring with greater and greater frequency throughout the world. Finally, he is called upon to testify before many committees on the Hill.

I will take the liberty of suggesting that this Subcommittee inquire into the problem of how a Secretary of State can discharge his obligations to the Congress effectively, yet with less time-consuming burdens. He must of course be available to the Congress when needed. The Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House should feel free to call upon him to discuss, on or off the record, our foreign policy problems. But the Secretary of State should not himself be required to defend minute details of expenditures, or to answer criticisms of minor incidents alleged to have been mishandled by some United States representative somewhere in the world. It is not merely the time he spends testifying, but also the time needed to prepare to answer any conceivable question.

I hasten to add that close relations between the Secretary of State and the members of the Congress are of cardinal importance. The Secretary must not only know what people around the world are thinking. He must also know what the people of our country are thinking, and for this information the Congress is a prime source of knowledge. In addition, a Congress which is well informed on foreign affairs is one of the prerequisites of an informed public. The Secretary of State can do a better job of keeping the Congress informed if he is not forced to dissipate his time on testimony concerned with trivia of administration or policies.

A Secretary of Foreign Affairs?

There have been a number of proposals for relieving the Secretary of State of some of his onerous duties. One such proposal

calls for establishing, under the Secretary, a new office in the Department of State with the title of Secretary of Foreign Affairs. The title, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, carries greater weight and authority than that of Under Secretary, and I am in sympathy with the establishment of such an office.

The duties of a Secretary of Foreign Affairs would naturally depend a great deal upon the personalities of the Secretary of State and the man occupying this new office. He might be of great assistance in dealing with the Congress, with senior Cabinet members, with other nations, and in attending some of the international conferences. In great part, his contribution would depend upon his own personal prestige.

Yet we must remember that there are limits to the amount of responsibility a Secretary of State can delegate. He cannot delegate to a subordinate his primary responsibilities for organizing and strengthening the great alliances of free nations. There are certain international meetings which the Secretary must himself attend. He should secure at first hand the feel of how other governments are thinking. He must be responsible both for negotiating with the Soviet Union, and for bringing about agreement among our friends and allies involved in such negotiations.

Another way of helping the Secretary of State is by making fuller use of the office of the U.S. Representative to the United Nations. I recognize that Ambassador Lodge has been given cabinet rank. But in dealing with other nations, we can make this channel of communication more effective by keeping our representative more fully informed of developments and by giving him greater authority to use his office at the United Nations.

In conclusion: I would recommend establishing the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs -- but only with the understanding that the President and the Secretary of State be given broad latitude in determining how this new office can best take some of the load off the Secretary of State.

State Department Organizational Problems - At Home and Abroad

The proper organization of the State Department and our missions abroad is of prime importance in developing the information for understanding and judgments required for advising the Secretary of State and the President. Once again, I would stress the necessity

of adjusting organizational patterns to the personalities of those in posts of responsibility. With this caveat, I have certain suggestions to offer.

I have been told, and I believe it to be true, that in some areas of the world, there is very little communication between the ambassadors and their staffs of different countries, even though the embassies have overlapping interests. I therefore suggest that ambassadors-at-large be appointed to effect coordination in such different regional areas. Both the Assistant Secretary of State and the Ambassador-at-large for the area concerned should travel through the region, bring the embassies in contact with each other, and see that they interchange information needed for a better handling of common problems. Exact division of the duties between the Ambassador-at-large and the Assistant Secretary should reflect the personalities of the individuals in the two posts.

I have great respect for our Foreign Service officers. Many are the best men that could be found for particular assignments as Ambassadors. Their knowledge of languages and judgment based on experience are of great importance. Perhaps, however, we move them about too frequently. There are of course advantages in rotation -- but I think that consideration should also be given to leaving men longer at some of the posts.

I believe, however, that some of our more critical posts should be filled by men of experience from outside the Foreign Service -- either from government or private life. An Ambassador must not only know the country where he is assigned. He must also know the United States, and the points of view and policies of the President and his Administration. The most important ambassadorial posts should be filled by men in whom the President has personal confidence.

An Ambassador must be in a position to recommend a course of action he believes in -- even if his recommendation is unpopular. This is sometimes difficult for a Foreign Service officer, who is looking forward to a lifetime in the Service. He knows that many a man has had his career set by holding the right view at the wrong time. An Ambassador is not always necessarily right, but right or wrong, he must express his views frankly to the President and the Secretary of State. He must be willing to lose his job if his recommendations are not well received.

I cannot find words strong enough to express my feelings about the selection of our Ambassadors because of large political contributions. There are no longer unimportant posts which can be used for political reward. Cuba is a case in point. The welfare and security of our nation are at stake in every country, and our Ambassadors should be selected on the basis of their qualifications.

There are better ways to finance our political parties than at the expense of our national interest and our nation's security.

Our foreign policy falls into four broad fields. The first three -- political, military, and economic -- are clear. The last -- one might term the "fourth dimension" of foreign policy -- is less understood. It is called variously the informational problem, the ideological conflict, or the battle for men's minds. Great administrative skill is needed to blend these factors into an over-all national policy best serving the needs of our country.

Take economic policy. The judgment of the Secretary of State should be sought on all foreign economic matters. This applies to our foreign trade policies, foreign financial policies, and both the economic and military portions of our mutual security program.

I do not believe, however, that the Secretary of State should have the operating responsibility for the mutual security, or foreign aid program. The State Department should be a policy-making organization, not an operating organization. Furthermore, our political and diplomatic relations with other countries should not be complicated by involving the Secretary of State in approving or disapproving this or that project. Such decisions should be based upon the economic or financial soundness of the project concerned.

In the field, however, the Ambassador must have disciplinary authority over every American official working in the country to which he is accredited. But, in his diplomatic discussions with the foreign government, he must draw a sharp line between matters which are political and those which are economic.

The director for the foreign aid program -- whatever his title may be -- should be selected because of his ability to organize and direct this vast world-wide operation. But, also, he should be a man who is prepared to take the guidance of the Secretary of State.

The Fourth Dimension of Foreign Policy

I turn now to the fourth dimension of foreign policy -- the information service.

As a government, we still have much to learn in developing a program which meets the challenge of our times. The head of the information service should be a man of exceptional experience. He should not be chosen because of his knowledge of publicity techniques. Instead, the kind of person needed is a man who understands America and what our country stands for in the world, who is aware of the ideological cross-currents now surging around the earth, and -- equally important -- who understands the problems and aspirations of the rest of the world, particularly the underdeveloped areas.

This man must also be willing to lose his job, rather than tailor recommendations for expediency. He should obviously keep in close contact with the Congress, but the Congress should not interfere with his daily operations. It is impossible to sit in Washington -- in the halls of Congress or in some other office -- and correctly foresee public reaction in some other part of the world. There is no substitute for intimate, on-the-scene familiarity with the country.

In dealing with other countries my own experience has made me conclude that it is absolutely necessary to show the people of the country why they are important to the United States. These people are no different from us. Like us, they are skeptical of the helping hand -- they are wary of Greeks bearing gifts. Also, the Communists are constantly imputing ulterior motives to our actions. Our Ambassadors and other representatives should go out of their way to explain why we are interested in the well-being of a country's people, and to make it plain also that every country in the world, be it large or small, is important to us. We can not buy gratitude, and we should not try to do so. But we can win respect and confidence. Then friendship will automatically follow.

It is likewise essential that our representatives present to the world a true image of America. We do not want to portray our country as a nation bent upon interfering with the internal social and economic order of other countries. Nor should we convey the feeling that our real goal in life is to promote American business.

Our true image is composed of other things. It consists of the ideals on which our nation was founded, and our concern for

human rights, individual dignity, the equality of man, and the improvement of living standards of people everywhere.

The Secretary of State must, of course, control the policy of the agency responsible for information whether it be set up as an independent agency or as an adjunct of the State Department. I would prefer to see it outside the Department, but under the policy control of the Secretary of State. But the question of how our program operates is more important than where it should be placed within the organizational structure of our government. Within the policy set, our people must be free to operate without undue interference. We cannot get the right people to do the job, nor can they achieve results, unless they are supported and not constantly subjected to petty criticism.

The Budgetary Process

The requirements of the cold war have made, and will continue to make, great demands upon our nation's human and material resources. We must not squander these resources on unnecessary programs, or on projects of marginal worth. But neither must we forego crucial programs because of claimed resource limitations which in fact may prove to be more fictional than real.

The Bureau of the Budget and the Treasury Department have an important role to play in protecting the President from unreasonable program requests. In my opinion, however, Budget and Treasury now exert too strong an influence upon policy decisions in the national security and foreign policy field. I would suggest that their wings be clipped.

Both the Bureau of the Budget and the Treasury are essentially "no" agencies, as far as expenditures are concerned. By the very nature of their responsibilities in the government, they are on the side of "go slower" and "do less." This has been true of previous administrations and it will no doubt be true in the future. The essence of the responsibility of the money agencies is to argue why something cannot be done or why it should not be done. In this time of growing across-the-board competition from the communist world, our government should be more concerned with the affirmative -- with what must be done, what can be done, and what should be done.

My own suggestion is that the views of the Council of Economic Advisers should be given greater weight in measuring the impact of

national security policies upon our economy, and in determining when adjustments in our economy will be required to fulfill national program objectives. Since it was first established in 1946, the Council of Economic Advisers has been free of what impresses me as the negative pressures of Budget and Treasury. The Council has been well equipped to assess the impact of programs upon our economic life, and to suggest ways of generating the resources that are needed. Today, we are not making full use of this important instrumentality of our government.

Your Subcommittee has suggested the possibility of a fourth annual Presidential Report to the Congress -- which would relate on a long term basis our national security needs with the resources required to fulfill them. To me, such a report would serve a very useful purpose, and I hope you will carry this idea further.

Staffing Problems

I stated earlier that good organizational machinery can never substitute for good people. The staffing problem of the national security and foreign policy departments and agencies is therefore of overriding importance. This applies both to the permanent career officials, and to the policy-making executives and the specialists who come to the government from private life.

It should go almost without saying that an efficient career service can be developed only if loyalty is given to the members of that service. There can be no objection to fair and prudent reviews of an employee's loyalty and moral fitness. But I would underline the word fair. We simply cannot expect highly qualified men to seek government careers, and to give their jobs their best, if they are subject to unfair criticism. Nor can we expect officials to act boldly and courageously, and to advocate some momentarily unpopular policy if necessary, if mistakes or differences of honest judgment can end in the destruction of their careers. If this continues to happen, we will inevitably end up with a "do little," "play safe," Civil Service, inadequate for the needs of our country at this time.

I fully agree with the ideas advanced by your Subcommittee concerning the development of a senior career service -- whose members would serve tours of duty in a number of different departments and agencies, and who would be given special opportunities for advanced training. I have seen the system work in England, where

high honor graduates of the great English universities enter the senior civil service and follow career lines specifically designed to qualify them for posts of great responsibility, including the permanent undersecretaryship of departments. I would not suggest our copying in detail the British model. For example, in American tradition, any system should permit the transfer of men who have shown unusual abilities from the regular Civil Service into the senior career staff. Nonetheless, the fundamental concept of a senior staff corps is sound, and we should get about the job of building such a corps.

Even with the best civil service, however, we will still need men and women from outside the government to fill our top policy-making posts, and to do specific jobs requiring specialized experience. We simply cannot find in the government itself all the talent needed to man all important posts and in such areas as technical assistance programs abroad, and research and development activities.

Our goal must be to make it as easy as possible for the government to draw upon the immense reservoir of human skills available in our business community, the labor unions, our universities, and the legal and other professions. But today, I fear, we are doing exactly the opposite. Far from offering affirmative encouragements to those private citizens able and willing to serve our government, we are putting unnecessary roadblocks in their way.

I refer specifically to our outmoded laws and rigid regulations concerning so-called conflicts of interest. Today, stock divestment requirements, and hazy regulations concerning pension rights, often mean that a candidate for some high government post must sacrifice both his financial future and that of his family before he is permitted to serve in a job for which he is eminently qualified and in which our country needs him.

During my many years of service in the government, I have known literally hundreds of business leaders temporarily in government service. They were men with few exceptions who would lean over backward rather than use their official position for private or corporate advantage. Yet our existing conflict of interest laws, and their interpretation, are based on the assumption that every person serving our government is a potential thief or knave. An updating of these laws is clearly needed, and I strongly support the efforts of your Subcommittee in this direction.

One further point: During and immediately after World War II, we paid no heed to a man's party affiliation in filling top positions in the Departments of State and Defense, Ambassadorships, and other jobs down the line in Washington and abroad. The only yardstick of selection was the man's ability to do the job. I would now like our government, as a matter of policy, to return to this practice.

Committees - Their Use and Abuse

In a government as large and as complicated as ours, there is no alternative to the interdepartmental committee to coordinate policy and action. The reason for the existence of each such committee, however, should be kept under constant review. Many are a waste of time. Many were established when a need existed but now serve no apparent purpose except to give social outlet to staff members.

When I was Secretary of Commerce, I found that many interdepartmental committees were being used for what I might term "bureaucratic espionage." A department might send a junior staff member to a committee meeting in order to report back to his seniors on the plans of other departments. Armed with this information, the seniors could obstruct programs which did not meet with their own departmental bureaucratic objectives.

A committee can be of value only if the departmental representative is a man able to speak for the department and to make decisions -- then and there. The only exception should be if the decisions involved are of such major importance as to require top level agreement.

In England, during the war, I sat on one or two of the British War Cabinet subcommittees and observed their system in action. This, I was told, was the first time a foreigner ever sat on a War Cabinet committee. Each member Minister was himself expected to attend these meetings; if he could not, his Undersecretary would represent him. The Undersecretary spoke for his department unless the problem required referral to the War Cabinet itself. One of the small but very capable War Cabinet secretariat took minutes of the discussion, and prepared and circulated for immediate approval a paper based on the consensus of the views expressed. This document, with its recommendations for action, represented the position of the subcommittee and was sent to the War Cabinet for decision.

Political versus Technical Decisions

In our form of government, the basic policies of our nation are established by our elected political leaders -- the President and the Members of Congress. Often, much specialized technical knowledge must enter into the framing of wise national policy. Our political leaders must and do pay close heed to expert advice -- whether it be military, scientific, economic, or otherwise. But the decision must be made by the political leaders.

The manner in which the British approach this problem may be of interest to the Subcommittee. The British, unlike us, can establish a coalition government during a national emergency. The British War Cabinet consisted of political leaders of all parties -- Conservative, Labour, and Liberal. It did not include the service ministries. The reasoning behind the composition of the War Cabinet was that its decisions affected the very survival of Britain. They were policy decisions -- not technical decisions. Therefore, they were decisions to be made by the political leaders.

The War Cabinet was built around ministers without departmental responsibilities. In the beginning, the Foreign Minister was the only exception to this rule.

The British decision to send an armored division to the Middle East in the summer of 1940 was a leading example of the War Cabinet in action. This decision was made on political grounds.

My own feeling is that, in our country, we too often mistake political policy decisions for technical decisions, and that we expect technical experts to make political decisions. For example, the question of whether we should end nuclear tests under proper conditions is a political decision -- based, of course, on technical advice.

Let me make it plain that the expert plays an indispensable role in policy formulation, but we must realize his limitations, and not expect him to assume political responsibility.

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE DIRECTOR

Attached for information is Charlie Haskins' memorandum for the record of General Cutler's and Dillon Anderson's appearances before the Jackson Subcommittee on 24 May. Matters of particular interest are marked in red. Also attached is an extract of Kennan's executive session testimony on 26 May concerning which Charlie Haskins has asked Bob Amory for views on release. Also attached is Governor Harriman's prepared statement before the Jackson Sub-committee of yesterday.

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Noted by DCI
6/3/60

JOHN S. WARNER
Legislative Counsel

3 June 1960
(DATE)

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